

SATURDAY REVIEW

No. 4007. Vol. 154

13 August 1932

Price Threepence

REGISTERED AS A NEWSPAPER

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Notes of the Week

"But, Mithter Baldwin—ooh, ooh."

"I have told you, Mr. Bennett, that I consider it a fine example of a Shaitan rug.

At Ottawa I like the border. Of course the pattern is conventional—"

"Conventional? You say conventional?" old Mr. Bennett's voice rose to a shrill scream; his white (and not immaculately clean) beard stood stiffly in the breeze which came through the open doorway of his little shop. "I am athtonithed—perfectly athtonithed—conventional!"

"The pattern" continued old Mr. Baldwin with that exasperating air of being deaf which distinguishes the entirely normal Englishman when dealing with any sort of foreigner "is, as I said, conventional. But not much the worse for that. The rug"—he lifted a corner, smelt it, and bit off a loose thread which he spat out carefully after rolling it round his palate—"might be worth ten millions."

"Ten millions? Ten? Oh, my God, ten"—old Mr. Bennett's voice fell from the upper register of delirium to the low moan of a dying man.

"Or, with the new carpet thrown in, eleven."

There was a long pause, while Mr. Bennett expired slowly, but in evident pain, against the corner of the door. Mr. Baldwin filled his pipe and watched him with careful unconcern.

"Rosie—Rosie"—Mr. Bennett had raised himself on one hand and his voice was singularly strong in a man so obviously at the last extremity. "Rosie—come here, my daughter."

So Rosie came from the house, a bold (it would be wrong to say brazen) hussy, with dark, flashing eyes and that free Dominion swing of the well-formed hips so typical of her race.

When he saw her, Mr. Baldwin shifted his pipe to the other side of his mouth to utter the strange words "Et tu, Bruce."

"He says"—Mr. Bennett was moaning again—"he says the rug is not worth twenty millions, not even—oh Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob!—with the carpet thrown in."

"Well" said Rosie "it isn't."

Mr. Baldwin shifted his pipe again and waited. Mr. Bennett began to moan and then he waited also.

"It is" Rosie went on "worth fifteen millions."

Mr. Baldwin removed his pipe altogether. Before he could speak Mr. Bennett began an epileptic fit. He interrupted himself to say "Fifteen millions? The girl's mad. She needs an alienist. Her mother was like this. Fifteen millions?"

He shot an uneasy glance at Mr. Baldwin and said, very suddenly and clearly "Seventeen millions."

"Twelve" said Mr. Baldwin—

(*Cetera Desunt*).

The rising in Spain has quickly been snuffed out. Those in charge of it in Madrid had not learned the first

Mañana Again

and most vital lesson in the revolutionaries' handbook: Be quick on the draw. The Central Telegraph and Telephone offices are the nerve centres of government. They are the first points to get into your hands, and the Madrid monarchists rightly made for the building. But having got there they bandied words with the policeman on duty on the stairs, instead of shooting him on the spot. This gave time for the police to be warned by telephone. Any modern bank robber would have done better.

The chief of Madrid's Republican Police made no such error, but personally shot the first of his opponents within sight. His example, we may be sure, will be followed by the government, who risk their necks or at least highly select jobs. In Seville too, General Sanjurjo, who was stated to have mastered the city, has been ingloriously evicted and captured.

We are not greatly concerned. Spain is some way from us, and our chief interest is that its Government should not fall into Communist hands. Apart from this we can only say that the Republican regime in Spain has not as yet increased any regrets on our part at not being born citizens of that land.

**

Before the fall of the monarchy the situation in Spain was complicated. Since that event it is not less so. Most Englishmen have

The Young Pretender?

sympathy with King Alfonso as a man of courage and a sportsman and the husband of an English princess. If he is a monarch of lost opportunities, he at least merits admiration for having avoided the extensive civil bloodshed that he might easily have caused. It is believed that the aim of responsible leaders in the Spanish royalist party is not the recall of Alfonso XIII., but, if successful, the offer of the throne to his third son, who is a cadet in the naval college at Dartmouth and said to be a boy of much promise.

Pending Bellona's issue, those grave humourists in the Cortes known as the Committee of Responsibilities had already issued a warrant for the arrest of King Alfonso (now shooting game, not men, in Bohemia). The above mentioned chief of police is reported as saying that he will do his best.

**

Mr. Stimson, the U.S. Secretary of State, made a speech this week on the subject of the Briand-Kellogg Peace Pact remarkable

"The other fellow began it, Sir"

both as a piece of special pleading and as a notification that American foreign policy means to keep a watchful eye upon the Manchurian situation. Regarded as an impartial ex-

position, this argument is vitiated by the notorious difficulty of showing what nation is the aggressor in any war.

Even in a case so well known as the Franco-German war of 1870 it is still a matter of dispute who was the responsible party, and in one far clearer, that of the war of 1914, where no reasonable doubt can be entertained, there are still to be found many persons engaged in the attempt to exonerate Germany—not to mention the fact that virtually the whole of that nation has been hypnotised into believing itself the victim.

**

The American foreign secretary's statement that "a nation which sought to mask imperialistic policy

The Stiggins Touch

under the guise of the defence of its nationals would soon be unmasked" is worthy of Stiggins himself. Were other critics lacking, the late Stresemann has been at pains to explain in his posthumously published papers how the thing should be done.

**

In the case of special interest to the United States, and specially emphasised by Mr. Stimson, of the Japanese operations in Manchuria, there has been no war at all, both the Japanese and Chinese

Hands off, Nippon

(or whatever there may be of it) governments having carefully avoided a declaration of war or even a breach of diplomatic relations.

What Mr. Stimson really means is that Washington will make as much capital as it can out of the Peace Pact to prevent American commercial ambition in the Far East from being impeded by Japan. America will use the Peace Pact in her own interests. So doubtless will all other nations.

**

According to report in London's League of Nation circles some of the bickerings at Geneva owe their origin to the curious construction

Argosies

or

Wargosies?

of monster liners for the Italian merchant marine. It was not new war-vessels but new harbingers of commerce and good will that spilled the beans. And all because in the Genevan discussions on naval parity in the Mediterranean the French Admiralty asserted that these two new vessels were so constructed as to be potential engines of war. Plated decks, arrangements amidships, strengthened sides are curious additions to a commercial unit of a fleet! No wonder Socialist tempers were frayed at the raw edge: actions and reactions in the blue seas of Cannes were in the mind's eye.

Our shipping lines disliked Continental subsidies to commercial rivals. But this is another matter. Yet it was the more old-fashioned diplomats who were described as good men sent abroad to lie for their country!

Election and post-election violence in Germany and tales of severe repression to come leave us cold.

Furor Germanicus Violence is not to be judged by the same practical standard in Germany as in other civilised countries. By saying "practical," we mean not to prejudge the morals of the case. It is a fact that taken as a whole, Germans are far more prone to serious violence than ourselves, the Austrians, French or Italians. They do not in the least understand our respect for human life, nor do they feel revolted by political murder which since the war has become a popular method of expression with all parties in the Fatherland.

**

However the pull-devil, pull-baker controversy between those first cousins, Nationalists and Nazis, may end, whether Hitler becomes

A point of Conjecture Chancellor or President of the Republic, or merely puts his lieutenants into office by the side of General von Schleicher and Colonel von Papen, their initial visiting cards in the shape of bombs and bullets matter, in the vulgar tongue, no more than a flea-bite. The only interesting point in this affair would be if, as some observers on the spot hint, the recent Nazi outrages are really the work of Communist or anarchist elements that have insinuated themselves into that party and may be trying to bring it into disrepute with the more sober Nationalists.

**

How truly Christian are the methods of Mr. Kensit and his friends as exemplified by the sack

Lack of Leadership of St. Hilary's at Mazarion, in Cornwall! What an edifying spectacle for members of other churches and religions to have a Vicar put under restraint while ornaments emblematic of Christ and of the Virgin were forcibly torn down from the walls and altar of the church!

An order had been made by the Chancellor of the Diocese for the removal of certain objects. We do not criticise that order. We do not dispute the proposition that the Vicar, to incur it, must have gone beyond the law. We do not under-estimate the exacerbation of Protestant feeling in the Truro diocese, or fail in sympathy with such feeling. But what we do emphatically maintain is that the whole admixture of farce and melodrama brings scandal upon the Church and reveals that lack of leadership on which the Saturday Reviewer has commented.

**

Is anyone surprised at the beatification—or almost—by the De Valera Government of the

The Burial of a Traitor Irish traitor James Dowling, condemned to death during the war? Implicated in the Casement treason and charged with serving in the Irish rebel

band organised by the Germans, this man was convicted, then reprieved, then died. Now his body has been buried again in Dublin with "Republican honours." It was doubtless an honour after the heart of the subject of so much pomp that among the official mourners last week were two German soldiers.

But why not a monument to Casement himself?

**

Three of our Middle-Eastern Colonies just now are a fit subject for the student of affairs, and for

Middle-East Problems—One

that matter for the Colonial Secretary himself—who is well fitted to deal with it. His return from Ottawa cannot be too swift in that respect. That Cyprus needs "first-class brains" is admitted in Whitehall. And Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister may be congratulated on selecting Sir Reginald Stubbs, a first-class administrator, to take the nominal second-class governorship there in place of his first-class post in Jamaica. Cyprus lies strategically across the mouth of the projected oil-pipe line from Mosul westwards; it is a stepping stone for the Malta-Iraq air-route. And all considered, this island should within a generation reach an unexpected prosperity in British hands.

**

The second field receiving official attention to a marked degree is Malaya; there however the new

Two policy of its chief, Sir Cecil Clementi, a Colonial administrator with a great reputation, is not at all popular with the powerful tin and rubber interests. Centralisation, with a dose of Democracy to follow, is not a cocktail to encourage the Straits, least of all in these financially debilitated days. What Lord Passfield thought safe eye-wash in 1929 to bluff the I.L.P. out of Socialism in our time is just so much junk to this Parliament.

Imperial security and commercial development are watch-words the Colonial Secretary might remember. He no more than Mr. Thomas has a right to gamble with the people's food and means of livelihood. And since the war Singapore has sprung into being as the Clapham Junction for the East. "Empire" to-day involves marriage of the fruits of the tropics with the manufactures of temperate zones.

**

The last of the three is Ceylon, the Achilles heel of India since the Donoughmore "reforms."

Three For Oriental politicians were quick to see in them an experiment with Ceylon as the patient on the operating table with amateur surgeons of the constitution walking the wards before trying a 'prentice hand in private practice on India itself. Rickshaw boys enjoy a vote there now—and foreign business enjoys the contracts! So Morley's gibe at Joe Chamberlain in the eighties, "As the Empire expands, Birmingham contracts," is now a double negative.

"The Twelfth" has come and gone—disappointing here and exceeding hopes there. And the

Good Hunting usual things have been written about grouse-shooting and grouse-cooking, two complementary arts

or sports. The crack of the rifle on the moors has escaped our notice but we have read that "the muzzle-loader has made way for the breech-loader with its infinite *varieties of precision*." The italics are ours. The perfect, if unexpected, description of the familiar behaviour of a shot-gun belongs to the author.

Anyhow good hunting, to adopt a B.B.C. phraseology, to all who walk on the moors, and to those who use dogs, and to the men who occupy butts, to the keepers, and the beaters, and the ladies who come out with the lunch, to all sportsmen throughout this land, to the fishers for salmon and the catchers of trout, to the makers of tackle and those who hire out boats, and—certainly—to Mr. Harold Hardy and Mr. Ennis who (for all we know at this moment) may still be struggling with a giant tunny fish off Scarborough. Good hunting, all—good hunting !

**

We take credit to ourselves for having predicted the success of the British foil champion, Lloyd, in

More Olympics getting into the final pool in the individual competition at Los Angeles. This is no mean feat.

France and Italy's best fencers were there. Lloyd deserves hearty congratulation. But alas for Leander. The free fight between the Brazilian and German, and the bickering between the German and the American waterpolo teams with the Los Angeles police intervening can surprise no one who has watched an international match of this sport in which the tactics appear to consist largely of a series of deliberate fouls. Such is the flurry of the water that the referee is impotent to exercise serious control over the players and when they are under it tweaking one another's toes or indulging in similar amenities his whistle is totally inaudible to them. When he is purple in the face and can blow no more, they come to the surface and regard him with beautifully studied faces of injured innocence.

**

A much advertised remedy to end trade depression, influentially backed in the City, is a

By Uneasy Payments campaign to educate us all to buy goods on credit. Crudely put, it results in high-pressure salesmen over-persuading mugs into buying something they can do without and cannot really afford. In "prosperity" America a vendor of vacuum cleaners one day watched a housewife shake a dusty rug from a window. In a flash he pounced on her, talked his way in, hooked his demonstration model to the electric plug and within two minutes was back in the street with her instalment

cheque ! This was widely commended "as good for business, which is good for Prosperity." The aftermath undoubtedly reveals that a primary cause of the slump in over-production. Hire-purchase must take part of the caning.

The prevalent form here is the peddling of innumerable encyclopaedias, sewing-machines, and cheap furniture. The good lady of the house is spell-bound by clever sales-talk, falls into arrear of contribution, is duly summoned and ignorantly puts the summons and its twin, a judgment-summons, into the W.P.B. The husband, poor soul, hears about this business transaction for the first time from the stout limb of the law who escorts him off to gaol, protesting, in respect of his wife's debts.

A Welsh Court holds the record at present of 450 judgment summons in a day; though a Lancashire Judge affirms that he once met 380 labourers seeking higher education by similar purchases of an encyclopaedia. What was then a minor scandal of the times is now a public evil.

**

An American tourist—how pleased Odysseus must be in the Isles of the Blest to know that he

Hedges and Hustle comes from Ithaca, N.Y.—has been grumbling to the *Times* that our untrimmed hedges interfere with the motorists view of the scenery. He wants them trimmed. Worse still, Dr. Fox, the Secretary of the Roads Beautifying Association, declares that there is "nothing more maddening to the person of aesthetic taste than to find a beautiful view obscured by overhanging hedges just at the point where the scenery ought to be at its best."

Might we suggest to Dr. Fox that there are many things more maddening? A row of bungalows, for instance. An English hedge, luxuriant and wild, is a thing of beauty which is peculiarly our own and when it interposes its glory between the motorist and a view it will have done him a good turn if it makes him get out of his car and search for that not uncommon object of the countryside, a gate. Just a little delay will teach him the beauty of leisure—and if anything wants trimming it is not the hedge but the meaningless hustle of the motorist.

**

It is no secret in Whitehall that the Home Secretary has been much perturbed by various

Real Prison Reform events this year in the prison service. And the new appointment made lately to the office of Principal Prison Commissioner may

be the sign of a new policy. Sop-and-sentiment has dangerously over-shot the mark. As to Borstal, as we have said already, parliamentary review of its working is overdue; and the stamp of prison governor in general needs raising to a higher standard.

Winelovers in this country are not generally to be found among the Little Englanders and their Empire Wines hope that wines which would justify any preference may be found among those produced by the Dominions has inspired a number of tastings.

Of one of these, Mr. H. Warner Allen writes : " London wine merchants have long been hoping that they might be able to offer their customers Dominion wines which would bear comparison with European wines of a similar type. The word ' type ' must not be misunderstood : it means, not that the Dominions should accomplish the impossible by furnishing the home market with Clarets, Burgundies, Ports, Hocks, Moselles, etc., since the essence of all these wines depends on a soil and climate that cannot be reproduced, but by offering to the wine-lover over here wines native to the soil which would appeal to a discerning palate.

**

" A special collection of Australian wines, some of them relatively old in bottle and therefore not commercial propositions—there is no supply of these An Interesting Tasting wines to meet a demand—was sent over to friends of mine for their consideration and opinion. They were conscientiously tasted and the unanimous verdict seemed to show that it is as hopeless for Australia in present circumstances to try and produce wines of bottle-age as it is for Algeria. A natural ordinary Algerian wine when it is well made provides a beverage which is not to be despised. The more expensive Algerian wines which remain in bottle develop a vulgarity of taste which is revolting. Age adds nothing to the good qualities of a wine : it only expands them. On the other hand it exaggerates everything that is ignoble and that lacks breeding.

**

" Coarseness is the defect against which the Australian wine we tasted have to strive. This vice became impossible—almost nasty Defects of Age in fact—in a wine which was eight years old. The only wines that were drinkable were those from the wood. Of these, frankly I did not like the red natural wines ; not one of these was equal to an ordinary Algerian wine which can be imported into this country at a lower price. Of the white wines, the cheapest and youngest was a miracle of violent taste. It shattered the discreet memory of a dry sherry which had just been taken with a suggestion of a perfume intended to drown a less pleasant odour.

" The best of the bunch was a white wine of 1929, which might compare quite favourably with a Hessian Hock of no particular character."

The motorist appears not to be such a dreadful fellow as most people have been led to believe.

The Other Side

According to the figures concerning motoring offences in England and Wales published recently by the Home Office, he was a person who devoted his life to dashing frenziedly about the country in a desperate and successful series of attempts to end the lives of other people. The statistics of his crimes seemed appalling, so appalling that even the Automobile Association has been looking into them.

The result is that the majority of the offences turn out to be concerned with mere technicalities—lighting, obstruction, noisiness and so on. The death-roll on our roads is admittedly an unhappily high one, but it is not entirely due to the motorist. A Home Office report on the offences of pedestrians would make illuminating reading.

**

A hotel in Regent Street is making a bold attempt to popularise the continental café habit of taking one's aperitif while sitting

A Brave Experiment out on the pavement. To be accurate, the space for the tables was not exactly on the pavement but in the entrance to the hotel, being conveniently roofed in by the overhang of the first floor. During the present spell of fine weather, trade must be fairly brisk, but it would be interesting to learn the result of the experiment when the more seasonable English weather returns. We imagine that the sight of a succession of Londoners, all with mackintoshes and umbrellas, scurrying past to escape a torrential downpour might be a little dispiriting.

Still, it is a valiant attempt to introduce the spirit of lightheartedness into materialistic London and as such deserves every encouragement, though possibly the real obstacle in the path of its success will still prove to be the old and familiar one.

**

Thunder

This is the warning note that Zeus makes After, with flash of wand, He parts the clouds To loose the torrents from His aerial lakes Upon the earth's parched lands and thirsting crowds.

This is the mighty signal of His Love That crowns the flashes as He smites the sky ; The rolling Voice that thunders from above : " I am the Over All and thou the fly ! "

This is the stern reminder to the wise— To those who sit on throne or study-stool— Who, even, score immortal symphonies— That Zeus treats equally the wit and fool And does not fail at times to strike him dead, So rain may welter from His water-shed.

OWEN HAMILTON.

A Day in the "Red City"

By H. R. S. Phillpott

(*El Glaoui, Pasha of Marrakesh, the powerful Moorish ruler who is known as the "Sultan of the Atlas," is in London sight-seeing, shopping, and playing golf. He is the Moroccan equivalent of a great Indian Rajah.*)

SUNRISE in Marrakesh. "The Red City" is so-called because of the ten-mile stretch of red mud wall that has encircled it for centuries. A great golden ball climbs up over the Atlas mountains. There is a hint of the mystery and the silence of the Sahara that lies not so far away. The snow-covered peaks in the near distance gleam and glow. In the garden below bare-footed Arabs dig and veiled women weed. Away in a corner a camel, who seems to have absorbed all the philosophy and patience of the world since it began, pads slowly and solemnly round a well. His never ending circles pump the water that he so seldom needs. The rapidly warming sun shines on the clustering fruit of orange and lemon trees. The "Red City" awakes slowly and seemingly reluctantly to the excitements and the sunshine of another Moroccan day.

Ba Ahmed's Palace. Ba Ahmed was once a slave. The blood of the negro ran strong in his veins, but he walked along the mysterious avenues of the East to wealth and power until he achieved his greatest desire, which was the building of the Palace. Then he died—by order of the Sultan. The Palace now is used only for receptions by the Resident-General of France. By one of the many lovely gardens is the chamber which Ba Ahmed reserved for the Favourite of the Harem. It is now used occasionally by a French Secretary.

The guests stroll from one great apartment to another to wonder at the painted cedar-wood ceilings, to marvel at the intricacies of the mosaics, and then to walk from garden to garden with their palm trees, cypress trees, trees bowed down with oranges, lemons, grape fruit. And in all of them are fountains burbling and splashing.

A French gendarme and an Arab, in a frenzy of shouting excitement, come tearing madly along on bicycles. Laden donkeys are urged with shouts and beatings to this side and to that. The queer slouching walk of the veiled women gives place to a quick little run, and muffled shrieks issue from their covered mouths. Tall Arabs shout and gesticulate. Only the beggars, crouching or lying under the walls, are indifferent. There is a blast of bugles, a fierce beating of drums, a clattering of furious hoofs. A French officer on an Arab horse gallops madly down the street. After him tear the buglers and the drummers of the Moroccan Spahis, blowing and beating, content only if they make noise and speed. Behind them another company of Spahis. Their red and white robes belly in the breeze like the sails of a thousand yachts. Their

swords glitter. They shout and ride like devils. There is no attempt at formation. The horses leap to the pathway and back again. Only speed matters. A motor-car slams along. In it is a grey bearded Frenchman, who bows and smiles. M. le Resident is leaving Marrakesh.

The *Souks*, or markets are in little alley-ways, dim and reeking with a million smells. Rushes are threaded overhead to beat back the African sun. The lanes, turning this way and that, are of such a width that standing in the middle and stretching out the arms one can almost touch the "shops" on either side. The "shops" themselves are little hovels of mud and stone. There are no intermediate spaces, no windows, no doors. The left-hand mud wall of one is the right-hand mud wall of the other. Fires glow in some of them, and Arab smiths, with hardly room to swing their hammers, beat out little shoes for donkeys. In others the butchers display strips of repulsive-looking meat on evil walls. Here and there is a "shop" piled with meal and semolina, and from the middle of the heaps the swarthy face of an Arab with much negro blood in him looks placidly out waiting for the customers whom Allah may or may not send him.

The Street of the Silk Sellers is cleaner and less crowded. The Street of the Brass Sellers is packed with a seething mob of Arabs waving above their heads the purchases they have made.

A queer, chanting, treble noise. In the semi-darkness of one of the tiny mud-walled "shops" are seen flashing eyes and rows of small white teeth. There are a dozen Arab children there learning the Koran and learning it aloud, because it is forbidden to read the Koran in silence. A man with a burnous drawn over his head sits huddled in front of them. It is a native school.

Sunset. The unforgettable scene should be watched from the roof of the house built by Sir Harry Maclean, the Scot who left the English Army, took service as instructor in the Army of Sultan Moulay-el-Hassan, became a Kaid, and had high offices showered upon him. The building is now the headquarters of the municipal service. Below is the seething market-place of the Jama-el-Fena. The name is that of the mosque of death, but now in the great space Arabian story-tellers have their say, snake-charmers perform their astonishing feats, and wide-eyed Arabs from the hills and the desert consult the "doctors" who squat there and wisely prescribe faith as the most effective part of the weird "cures" they administer.

For the rest the city lies quiet within its red walls. There is a strange gleam on the green roofs of the Sultan's palace and the house of the Pasha. With care and guidance it is possible to pick out the twenty-eight mosques of the city. The Atlas range

stretches on the one hand. On the other the lesser heights of the Djebel mountains. The sun sinks lower. The rich wine colour of the mountains changes to an unbelievable purple. White clouds in the east flush to a rose pink. Those in the west are edged with burnished copper. Palm trees cut the skyline into delicate traceries. The purple of the distant mountains deepens to a velvety blue-black. The sky above glows and reddens.

The Minaret of the Kotoubia rears its height to cut out a great column of the Western scene. It has done the same thing night after night for 800 years. It is one of the forbidden places of Marrakesh, for no Christian infidel may enter.

The lights change miraculously. Where there was a gleam a moment ago there is now a coloured shadow. The last red rim of the sun disappears and suddenly one sees at the top of the Minaret a figure silhouetted against the darkening horizon. His high-pitched, penetrating, chanting voice rings out over the city, on which the evening has fallen. It is the Muezzin calling the faithful to prayer: "Allah Akbar! Allah Akbar! God is great. There is no God save God and Mohammed is his Prophet. Come to the prayer! Come to do good! Allah Akbar! There is no God save God."

Mountains and Mice—I.

By Sir Lionel Haworth, K.B.E.

THAT concrete abstraction, the man in the street, must be wondering what has happened to his leaders and his country. Conference after conference takes place and terminates in a promise to him of a new world. He is told that the labours of the politicians have produced a mountain; he watches patiently—too patiently—and observes, creeping from the back of the political stage, a weak and miserable mouse, hardly capable of sustaining life.

He is told that the Naval Conference has achieved great results, because agreement has been reached, on a few points or principles, by the more advanced peoples. The fact that details cannot be settled, or that until the other Powers conform no advance can be made, is smoothed over. While Great Britain gives a lead in naval disarmament, an example which, in practice, is followed by no one else, the psychological result is the Geneva witticism, quoted by the German Dictator in his broadcast to his nation, "When is a battleship defensive? When it flies the British or American flag."

The Geneva Conference resulted in what? We were told that it must be made a success or civilisation would fail and the world, as we know it, be destroyed. The most hardened optimists have had to admit that the results are disappointing.

The German Dictator, addressing 70,000,000 Germans, describes it as a catastrophic failure. Without being catastrophic, it was unquestionably a failure, a result which was a foregone conclusion. Some of the results are almost childish: for instance, the question of the limitation of the size of guns, when it is not determined what that limit shall be.

For India we have a Round Table Conference, and the Prime Minister rightly states that, without communal agreement, nothing can be done. But there is no communal agreement, and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and Mr. Baldwin assure us that they are ready to provide one.

With a flourish of trumpets, we state that Federation will make a new India. The Indian Princes attending the Conference tell us that they are ready to come to their country's aid and join a Federal system. On returning to India, they find they can only do so provided Great Britain

guarantees their rights and their position against their fellow countryman. "Certainly," replies Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. Lord Lothian returns from his committee to India and says that the British can only be one of the lesser minorities in the new Indian Political Constitution. "Certainly," echoes Mr. Baldwin, and we reach a situation in which this lesser minority is to guarantee the rights of a third of India belonging to the Indian Chiefs.

Absurdity piles itself upon absurdity, while politicians posture, make believe calls to make believe, and the answer, an empty echo, is amplified to an ignorant public through every political loud-speaker.

In the past the great power of the British people, in a developing world, has been their remarkable aptitude for adapting themselves to exciting situations, a power which has made them the greatest colonists and has founded a great Empire. Added to this has been an equal capacity, which they have inherited from Saxon times, for choosing their "wise men," their Witanagemot, and leaving the management of affairs to their guidance, as long as they showed themselves fit for it. As a result, the men who made the Empire ruled it.

To-day the men who rule the Empire would never have made it, and many of them have no desire it should continue, while the world has become too complex for the man in the street to be able to determine whether those whom he has chosen are doing their duty. Thus democracy is slowly dying of indigestion.

The main reason for our political mistakes is the failure of our people, headed by their leaders, to understand that abstract truth is not necessarily truth in reality and in practice relativity is not confined to science; its facts are equally strong in the work-a-day world.

Truth is only real when it is relative to the circumstances which exist. In our daily life we realise this essential fact and act in accordance with it. In politics we hoist the flag of abstract truth and are surprised when we have to haul down a limp and drooping rag symbolical of our failure. And yet, the relative facts are obvious to the most casual observer.

(To be continued.)

How Farming Could Save Industry

By R. Dudley

PENDING the result of the Ottawa conference it is perhaps futile to speculate on the agricultural policy of the Government, but it might be useful to consider the value of a revivified agriculture to the general trade and industry of the country. What industry needs most is a market to sell its goods. Without disparaging the efforts of our politicians to sell our goods abroad, (which efforts have not met with much success), the possibility of selling them, or more of them at home seems to have been almost entirely overlooked.

What peculiar merit is there which seems so fascinating to the Victorian economic mind in placing, let us say pots and pans in a ship's hold and steaming with them a thousand miles or so, and bringing back a cargo of foodstuffs which could be quite as efficiently produced at home—and if produced in this country would employ numbers of men whose wages would pay for the pots and pans?

Unfortunately, however, our trading methods are not even as good as this example. What happens is that foodstuffs which we import are not exchanged for the homely pots and pans:—they are exchanged in the main for interest payments on foreign loans, and the sole persons who benefit are the comparatively few investors in foreign loans, so that we find both pots and pans and foodstuffs coming in against the interest payments. The logical consequence of such a policy is inevitably the lending of more and more money abroad, with an ever increasing army of unemployed whom we bribe into quiescence (for the time being) by means of the dole, and the building of a bigger and bigger Navy to convoy the interest payments of the city magnates.

Mr. Thomas Surprised

Figures quoted in a recent issue of the "Times" by its well-informed agricultural correspondent will repay study:—"The gross value of the output sold off the farms amounted to a little less than £300,000,000 in the United Kingdom, to nearly £275,000,000 in Canada, about the same amount in Australia, about £80,000,000 in New Zealand, £65,000,000 in the Irish Free State, and about £50,000,000 in South Africa."

The "Times" correspondent then goes on significantly to remark "Mr. Thomas, the Dominions Secretary, has confessed his surprise at this comparison of values." That is the whole trouble. So mesmerised have all the politicians become with the idea of so-called cheap foodstuffs from abroad that they forget the appalling cost of unemployment (to say nothing of its misery) which must be added to them, and which must inevitably filter down from the retailer to the consumer when by their present policy they are deliberately killing an industry, and a market, of such a magnitude.

Unfortunately for both industries the present soporific advice given to agriculture by the politician is to await the revival of industry! This advice may result from either lack of knowledge or

more probably want of courage in tackling the problem of commencing an exchange of commodities between two great complementary industries and breaking the vicious circle without running off to various conferences; for in this matter we have no one to consult but ourselves.

Let me give an example of this vicious circle which came to the writer's notice recently. A farmer who had sold his wool for 4d. a pound this year against 1s. two years ago went to his tailor to buy a suit of clothes thinking that in view of a drop of 66 per cent. in wool prices, clothes would be about 50 per cent. less. His tailor however blandly assured him that so far from the cost of clothes falling they actually cost him more to produce. Wages and rates were the same, he said, he owned the shop, Schedule A tax also Schedule D were increased and as he was not selling as many suits his overhead was more. The farmer was further assured that the difference of a few pence in the cost of wool did not affect the retail price of a suit. No sale took place and the farmer left determined to get rid of both sheep and shepherd, for the same thing occurs as regards wholesale and retail prices of mutton.

A Typical Case

Now this is an exactly typical case of what is happening not only with sheep but nearly every agricultural commodity.

The greatest market in the British Empire—the home agricultural market—whose potential worth to industry is not the £300,000,000 already mentioned but a further £200,000,000 if reasonable protection is given to all its branches, is being sterilised and driven into bankruptcy, while the cost of the havoc must certainly fall on the retail price of goods via the rates, for there is very little other method of recovering the cost of unemployment from the public as income tax is rapidly dwindling as a source of revenue. It is extremely difficult to understand why the simple remedy is not adopted of transferring the retailer's overheads to the foreign foodstuffs. Agriculture could then produce at a profit and every trade in the country would have the enormous market of £500,000,000 at its own doorstep, however badly the rest of the world might fare.

There can never be any cure for unemployment by employing others to produce those things we can equally well produce ourselves, and the sooner we realise this simple fact, the sooner we can arise from the major part of our economic troubles. The great advantage to this Country surely lies in its immense fertility as the figures show and in the very fact that we cannot yet produce all the food we require; indeed, had we reached saturation point—as other countries have in this respect—our position would be more difficult.

How often has one heard of a person looking for something—to find it, after all, beneath his very nose. Is not this the case with us to-day?

Red-Letter Days

The First of The Rocketers.—by Guy C. Pollock

IT was not wholly because it was my first time of real serious covert-shooting or because it happened to be in all ways a lovely week-end or because I shot so astonishingly well, but because of all these things—and others, I daresay, which are gone out of memory—that this was a red-letter day.

Perhaps unexpectedness was the most enticing ingredient. It was at an interview with a much older cousin (on whose memory be peace and gratitude for ever, after the order of kind men) that the affair began. He had finished with wise counsel and just enough of condemnation for the follies of youth when he turned and said "Do you shoot?" I concealed the leap of my heart and protested that I shot whenever and wherever I got the chance. Then he said "Come down with me to-night and shoot to-morrow." My heart fell back with a thud. I had to say that my clothes and gun were in another part of the country, that I could not or ought not to afford the journey, and that my inexperience would be a nuisance to him and the other guns. But he would have none of these things. He had guns, clothes, money and experience. That is how I, who have been young and now am old, should have behaved to other young men. But I haven't. Real kindness is quite a difficult thing.

"My" Dog

So the next morning found me armed with a gun which happened to fit me perfectly, with bags full of cartridges, in clothes belonging to another guest who himself was wearing a rather aggressively new suit. And that produced one of the unforgotten incidents of the day. For during all the morning this guest's retriever kept bringing birds to me and hanging about my heels, whatever her master might say or do. It must be true that dogs do not recognise faces and are much more sensitive to scents than to voices.

Fortunately, I knew in general what to do, and, more usefully, what not to do. Another of those really kind men who come occasionally to an unkind world had already taken me out on a mixed day when a few outlying copses were beaten out for pheasants. But another incident—which did not quite happen—is stamped firmly in my mind. It might have been the third stand at which I found myself facing the corner of one of those flat, ill-placed, ill-planted woods from which hardly a pheasant can be induced to fly at a decent height.

There had been a lot of banging about round the corner, where stood the two professors (how badly they shot!) who were shooting with two guns; I had seen nothing; I was excited, disappointed and hopeful; suddenly three hens emerged in front of me, on a level with my eyes; I lifted my gun and my finger had all but pressed the trigger, when my belated sanity showed me the whole line of beaters just behind these birds. I dragged the gun down, wiped some chilly perspiration from my forehead, thanked Heaven that

no one had seen me, and took to heart one of those early experiences which, like falls from a horse, are essential, and which are not really less effective when they stop short of homicide.

Before lunch triumph had come my way, for I had overheard my host saying to two other guns that, in a certain beat, he would leave his young cousin behind the wood in case something happened to break back. "I don't count him as a serious gun," he said. "Don't you?" said one of them, "then you haven't seen him shoot." And "Yes," said the other, "he's shooting damned well." I can feel now the gorgeous, warm blush of shy happiness which spread from my head to my toes.

The Crowning Mercy

It is true that I dealt unfaithfully with some curlers which looked to me quite easy—I should despair of them at first sight to-day—and that when two cocks came out to me, as beaters' gun I was so much pleased by dropping the first stone dead that I forgot the uses of a second barrel, much to the annoyance of one of the keepers. And I have no doubt that I did a number of foolish things and left undone a number of wise things, just as I do now every time I go out shooting. But the crowning memory belongs to the last stand of the day.

Here the guns were posted in a wide ride, with thin stuff ahead and behind. Most of the wood climbed steeply up a hill in front of us, and when the last rise began the birds came very high and very fast, and not quite straight but going away a little from left to right. I can see them now, and I have seldom seen better or more difficult birds. At that age, of course, my notions of how woods were or should be beaten were fragmentary. All I knew was that we were to expect birds over us.

And the first solitary bird came straight for me. Several of the other guns whistled and called to me. I hardly heard them; I was absorbed in this object still full of life and feathers moving overhead with an incredible velocity. So I jumped the gun up, swung right through, partly by chance and partly because the ground on which I was standing fell naturally away, and brought the pheasant crashing down far in the wood behind me.

That bird was a matter of conversation at night, and the fact that I never touched another feather of these rocketers was forgotten by the others and almost by myself.

After all, I suppose that one bird marked this day in the red letters of my calendar of memories.

And I rather think this day began the composition of a little Collect for Shooters which, without any shame, I rehearse always to myself on getting into the first field and taking post in every butt or at each stand throughout a day—"Let me shoot safely; let me shoot unselfishly; and, if that is in The Scheme, let me shoot well."

THIS WEEK'S ARGUMENT

Does Travelling Enlarge the Mind?

YES, BY J. DEFFELL.

TRAVELLING is to a man's general experience what the Emperor Charles V. said that a knowledge of each new foreign language is to his intellect: a window opened on to life. Just as a room without pictures resembles a face without eyes (note that twenty eyes are not needed in a face), so does a man who has never seen foreign countries suffer from partial blindness. True, this is a blindness that may be artificially corrected. I knew an old lady who had never been abroad and yet, by dint of application, learned a great deal about France, Italy and Germany, and both read and spoke the three languages. But such examples of intellectual industry are rare.

To argue that a man does not need to acquire at least a modicum of foreign knowledge would be mere waste of breath; and I am at a disadvantage here in that my opponent can employ his wealth of specious ingenuity, like the good *advocatus diaboli* that he is, in support of an untenable proposition, while I am driven to that thankless task, the maintenance of one self-evident. So little does it require proof, that the term of a travelled man is almost tantamount in common usage to that of an educated man. A cloud of witnesses, among them Bacon, may be called in my support.

Unless he be specially gifted, no man desirous of a well-balanced, ripened mind can afford not to travel. Unless he be specially foolish, no man who quits his native land for a space however short can fail to profit by travel or to return to it with mind enlarged.

A certain engineer, who in early days of internal combustion engines went round the world with a sea-going motor boat, was asked if they had been to Japan. He replied: "Japan? Ah, that was where the big ends came through the deck." Yet, not being a fool, this engineer did, without being aware, profit much by his experience then and on other foreign travel, for enlargement of mind is not necessarily a conscious progress.

To travel is to acquire the comparative habit of mind, which method of approach to any form of study is admitted to be the most fruitful of judicious result. Yet this is an ulterior benefit, and direct, positive enlargement of the mind begins for the traveller the moment he crosses the frontier. The foreign porter, customs officer, policeman, train, scenery, meals, all contain so many separate lessons for him, and his must be a dull mind indeed that is not spurred to curiosity and a fresh interest not to be satisfied save by personal observation.

It is needless to insist. Apart from the intrinsic joy in the beauty of new scenes visited, every day spent in surroundings unlike our own brings novelty or fresh delight and the incentive to learn yet more that is the main cause of enlargement in any man's mind.

NO, BY VIATOR.

"VANITY of vanities, all is vanity," and not the least of vanities is travel. Is it better to live by the telescope or the microscope? To extend one's thought to the mountains of the moon or seek for guidance from microbes and the infinitely small? The sane answer is clear enough. Pindar said erroneously: "Best of all is water." Without fear of error, we can declare that wine is better still, and that those who use their eyes at home to discern the truth of which wine is the father are nearer to reality than those who seek to escape from themselves and the pressure of actuality by studying the infinitely distant and the solar systems of electrons.

Once upon a time, perhaps, travel really extended human sympathies and understanding. The telescope was corrected by the microscope, because the traveller was compelled to live with the foreigners he visited in the conditions of their environment. He had to do in Rome what the Romans do.

Nowadays we may cross seas and deserts, speed airily through zones of time, pass a few hours amid peoples talking many thoughts and speaking different languages, with no more than the vaguest notion of the peril that sea and desert may mean to man, the strange tricks that geography may play on humanity, and the Babel of thoughts and languages which is this strange world of ours.

You may travel from Tokio to Timbuctoo, with an occasional break in those cosmopolitan hotels which make travel a farce, because their meaningless internationalism makes their food as insipid as the company of their guests. Drive wildly in a motor car through the hill towns of Italy, and bring back a memory of dust, punctures and breaks-down. Why observe and remember the centuries of history expressed in beauty by the towers of San Giminiano, the Etruria of Volterra or the Divine Lily Tower of Siena? Our ideal will be reached when we are shut up in a windowless box and set travelling round the earth at the speed of a satellite, never knowing where we are at any given moment.

The wise man finds all that he needs for his education, for "the bringing-out" of his soul, in a village home, and reads the universe in a blade of grass. He does not seek to escape from himself by careering madly round the world with black care sitting behind him. The wisdom of the peasant includes all philosophies, and those who live closest to Nature have minds that ripen like noble wine.

There is more human nature in a village than in a metropolis, and Jane Austen is a safer guide to conduct than all your travellers, Herodotus included. Man is a petty thing of limited understanding which can only realise the universe in miniature. It is not ours to sail through the empyrean on wings of fire: if we could, we should probably be no wiser than we are to-day.

Might-Have-Been Affairs

The Launching of a New Association. By C. E. Bechhofer Roberts

THE inaugural meeting of the It's Bad But It's British Association was held on Wednesday at the London Coliseum. In the unavoidable absence of Mr. Baldwin, who was speaking at a bye-election on behalf of the Liberal candidate, the chair was taken by the Prime Minister.

"It is easy enough to cheer when all goes well," said Mr. MacDonald, who was in his best platform vein, "and to congratulate ourselves on a job successfully achieved, but it takes a real man and a true Briton to show complacency in difficult circumstances. This is why we are gathered here today to launch this grand new organisation. Let the title of the It's Bad But It's British Association be our slogan in the fight that lies before us! Let us recall its teachings whenever we are faced with the hypocritical condolences of false friends, with the jeers of perjured traitors, and with the undisguised satisfaction of foreign rivals. Let us preach the doctrine of our new Association in our schools and in our churches and at our meetings for recreation and self-improvement; let us endeavour to show it forth in our lives."

The next speaker was Mr. C. B. Cochran, who said that there had been moments lately when he despaired of the future of the British theatre. Even spectacular shows, he said, no longer seemed to attract the public; he had, for example, recently spared neither trouble nor expense in putting on the stage a replica, replete in every detail, of the Battle of Waterloo. He had collected a cast of nine hundred performers, two hundred horses, twelve camels, Louie Armstrong's band, and no fewer than three hundred carrion-crows specially trained to hover over the heaps of slain in the final tableau. A thousand pounds' worth of valuable scenery was deliberately destroyed by fire twice daily; he had spent literally twenty times that sum every week in salaries for the all-British cast, who included artists as well-known as Francis Léderer (Wellington), Sacha Guitry (Blucher), and Oscar Dines (Napoleon), and such brilliant newcomers to the stage as Mrs. Merrick (as a vivandière) and Mr. Maxton (as the subaltern hero of the spectacle).

All the Stars

What had happened? he had lost money on the run; and this made him very reluctant to stage any more shows, at least until the beginning of the next theatre season. By that time he hoped the effect of the new Association's propaganda would make itself felt, and all those who went to his next production—it would probably, Mr. Cochran observed, be an astronomical revue with Sir Frank Dyson and Sir James Jeans as compères, if he could persuade them to embrace a stage career—would be able to say to themselves as they left the theatre (which would be transformed for the run of the piece into an exact facsimile of a Planetarium), "Well, it may be a pretty bad show, but at least it's British!"

Mr. Cochran was followed by a representative of the British film industry. This gentleman, who addressed the meeting through an interpreter, said: "We have bad acting, bad production, bad lighting, bad make-up, bad scenarios, bad press notices and, in short, the completest possible organisation for the production and dissemination of really bad films." But it was necessary, he continued, that the public, at present far too much inclined to patronize the technically superior products of American, German, French and even Russian studios, should be educated down to British films; and this purpose would be admirably served by the Association.

"Remember," cried the speaker, thrusting his interpreter on one side, "Elstree is not only *kolossal* bad, but it is *pyramidal* Grossbritannisch!"

A Pleasant Interlude

Speaking on behalf of literature, Mr. Harry Preston who was uproariously congratulated on his recovery from his recent illness, said he welcomed the new Association and would like to take a glass of wine with it and wish it all success. There are some traitors, he went on, who have the audacity to suggest that the standard of British novels is declining; this he utterly denied. When, he asked, had longer novels been written than are to-day turned out in their dozens by our leading publishers? Nor, he claimed, was it true to say that only a certain type of these attained success; on the contrary, some of the most successful British novels of recent years had been so simple in appeal that even a British heavyweight champion boxer could appreciate them to the full, whereas other best-sellers were so complex in their analysis of the principal characters' emotions that even a psychological expert like Jimmie Wilde had been defeated in the attempt to read them through.

Sir John Reith, who followed, said: I will guarantee that any impartial person who has listened to our programmes during the past year will bear witness that, in our dance music, our chamber music, our talks, our news reports, our hot despatches from the League of Nations, and our plays, we have adhered throughout to the principle that, however bad, they shall at least be British. "If we have included occasional relays from foreign stations," Sir John Reith concluded, "it has been chiefly to demonstrate the contrast between their wearisome excellence and our gloriously bad but British programmes. Good nate, everybody."

The speaker paused impressively for a few minutes, compelling silence with upraised hand. Then, "Good nate," he repeated and left the platform.

A Day of Dilemma—By Anne Armstrong

HAVING put the finishing touches to my dimensionoscope, a device of well nigh incredible cunning with which five dimensional entities can be viewed by our three dimensional consciousness, I touched the switch and awaited events.

As the machine warmed up (it takes about fifteen minutes) I realised that I was gazing upon a large beast with a sardonic countenance and distinguished from other beasts by the number and magnitude of its horns, which were formed in pairs of evenly matched tusks—one white, the other black, and of a very fine dimensional strength.

As by reason of the notable ingenuity of its construction my machine had an aural as well as a visual function I enquired (using a great deference) what he wished, taking care also, that my hand was near the switch in case of accidents.

He replied: "In view of the very notable ingenuity of your machine, I am surprised that you have not the wit to recognise me as a Dilemma in person."

This obviously accounted for the horns.

Further questioning soon elicited the information that Dilemmas impaled their victims upon these horns, which were apprehended by our consciousness as alternative courses of action, and whilst each horn was perfectly matched in strength against its mate, it needed great skill on the part of the Dilemma to impale his victim squarely. As a rule it was impossible to do this, and the victim was more impressed by one horn than the other. Moreover, there are two species of Dilemma—one is smooth coated and specialises in annoying its victims; the other very scaly and with larger horns which can only be escaped by violence or sudden death.

As mine was evidently of the former kind I was emboldened to ask for some account of his activities. And many and various points came out into the daylight.

Here, then (you will note the somewhat stilted style of talking) is his account of a typical day:

"I rose from my rest (my beast is speaking) at about 9 a.m. in your reckoning, and decided to visit a suburban house where I had observed the master rising somewhat late from his couch. Using a small pair of horns I impaled him on the question of missing his breakfast or his proper train. The former I pointed out would make him hungry and irritable during the morning and the extra lunch he would take would make him sleepy during the afternoon—the latter would bring him to the office an hour late, which might in turn necessitate working through the luncheon hour. Eventually he made a dash for the train which he just failed to catch—and I went on my way rejoicing.

I devoted the afternoon to some careful preparatory work (success after all in every profession is largely dependent on the care taken over details) and yet must I refrain from giving you information concerning the nature of this side of my business

lest you use it to my detriment. I returned to the fray by leaping upon a noted gourmet and wine taster who was giving dinner to an Aunt from whom he had great expectations. I presented to him that whereas his very carefully chosen meal obviously demanded as its complement white wine followed by Burgundy, his Aunt would consider herself slighted if he did not order champagne. Here I am afraid my aim must have been far from straight, and I cannot have impaled him upon both horns for he far too quickly decided that the potential pleasure of hearing the family solicitor reading out 'and to my well loved nephew . . .' was well worth the sacrifice of an immediate pleasure.

I admit I was surprised.

I then proceeded to a business house, and seeing that the result of some previous work was already taking effect, I refrained (for the moment) from adding to the mortification of my puppet. With my usual sagacity I realised that enough was as good as a feast and that my victim was resting gently but symmetrically upon both horns. His business (the apple of his eye) was on the verge of liquidation and he knew that even a large amount of money was unlikely to save his particular ship. On the other hand, however, his oldest and dearest friend was offering his all to be used at my victim's discretion as and when he thought fit. (You will have realised by now the months and months of careful preparation needed to bring about this state of affairs). Imagine my delight over the misery of mind of this unfortunate man. Should he take (and most assuredly lose) the money and yet save what, to him, was most precious; or should he refuse the money, keep faith with his friend, and loose all further interest in life? (For you must know that his business was more to him than life . . . or wife . . . or children.) The agony of mind, when I left, was unvarying and I decided that I must return the next day for further enjoyment.

Cheered by this obvious success I made noises like a door key at the house of a young matron who was taking certain advantages obtainable by reason of her husband's absence—so that she turned pale and said to her companion "You must vanish." Then I fixed him with the horn of being discovered or a ten feet drop out of the window in dressing gown and stocking feet. These got him really square as he dreaded that the latter might mean a broken leg and the former a broken head. He chose to jump and as fortune had it, got away with it undamaged. Luckily, though, I had not yet finished with him. I caught him another shrewd blow between creeping home or proclaiming his shame by hailing a taxi *en deshabille*. By now I was quite merciless so once more I impaled him; this time, on account of the scarcity of taxis at that hour, between standing and waiting for a taxi (still *en deshabille*) or of going in search of one.

I was even more pleased with the artistic effort of this venture when I saw him hail a car which proved to be carrying home (after a very late party indeed) his immediate superior in the business.

“And All kinds of Music”

By the Saturday Reviewer

THE demand for first class performances of symphonic music in London has increased by leaps and bounds during the past five years.

That astute impresario, the late Lionel Powell, provided the most effective answer to this demand by introducing various outstanding foreign orchestras to the English musical public, with a success in every instance which more than justified his sagacity. There can be no room for doubt that the announcement of a return visit of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra under Toscanini would be hailed with the wildest enthusiasm by London concert-goers, to be followed in many cases by a prompt and heartless abandonment of interest in any native undertakings that might be under consideration of support.

Clumsy Embargoes

That we should be continually compelled to look abroad for orchestral fare sufficiently attractive to fill our concert halls to overflowing is a humiliating thought. Wherein lies the remedy?

Certainly not in misguided and clumsy attempts to keep out foreign musicians by Board of Trade embargoes. We have heard so often that the most distinguished foreign conductors have stated after conducting our much-abused London orchestras, that “British orchestral players are as good as any in the world.” This comforting statement is borne out by our recognition of several old London players in the ranks of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra when that body visited us. It is obvious then that the fault lies not in the men, but in the masters.

The B.B.C. stands at the moment supreme master of the orchestral situation, in that it is able, by means of public funds to offer higher salaries and a more continuous contract to orchestral players than is in the power of any other concert promoter to pay. It does not necessarily follow, however, that the B.B.C. has secured for the London public the final best of symphony orchestras.

The B.B.C. Symphony orchestra has just embarked on its annual eight weeks' season of Promenade Concerts. This series of concerts represents by far the longest period in the course of the year during which the players are assembled day after day under the direction of the same conductor. It cannot be gainsaid that the young recruits (of whom there are a goodly number, especially in the string sections) gain their most valuable experience from this spell of continual rehearsal under the baton of Sir Henry Wood, of whose work during

the past thirty-five years it is not possible to speak too highly.

Studio Bewilderment

But what happens after the Promenade Season? The orchestra disappears from the platform of the Queen's Hall, except for a weekly symphony concert, and is doomed for the major portion of the year to play in various studios under a bewildering succession of conductors, each with his own ideas of what constitutes good orchestral playing.

The technique of a Heifetz, the tact of a diplomat and the patience of Job would not suffice to preserve the artistic ideals of a reasonably conscientious orchestral player when called upon (as often happens) to satisfy the varying demands of three different conductors in one day.

Other factors too prevent any orchestra engaged for the most part in studio playing from achieving and maintaining high rank in the musical world.

Not so good as Gramophones

Indeed it is questionable whether the symphony orchestra maintained by the B.B.C. at a cost, it is said, of somewhere in the neighbourhood of £100,000, justifies such an expenditure of public money, when one considers that the average broadcast performance of the B.B.C. “Studio Symphony orchestra Section X” compares far from favourably with the broadcasting of gramophone records of classical works played by such orchestras as the Philadelphia or New York.

A few weeks ago the daily Press let the public into the secret of Sir Thomas Beecham's long awaited plans for a new orchestra. We were told that the London Symphony Orchestra, after an honourable career of twenty-five years, would cease to exist and that from its ashes Sir Thomas proposed to create a new body, fortified by many brilliant players who had for various reasons held aloof from existing orchestras. In short, this was to be the best orchestra London had ever possessed, to be headed by a brilliant musician.

But apparently these plans have miscarried at the outset, for we hear that the London Symphony orchestra have decided to carry on with their usual season's work. We must possess our souls in patience until Sir Thomas returns from his triumphs in Munich. As the new scheme depended very largely on the co-operation of the leading members of the London Symphony Orchestra it is deplorable that such a contretemps should have arisen. We earnestly hope that Sir Thomas and the London Symphony Orchestra will settle their differences.

FILMS

By MARK FOREST.

Million Dollar Legs. Directed by Edward Cline. Plaza.

Shopworn. Directed by Nicolas Grinde. Plaza. *Polly of the Circus.* General Release.

I HAVE not been to Malvern to "hear" the screen version of Mr. Bernard Shaw's "Arms and the Man." So long as Mr. Shaw insists that his dialogue is not to be cut and that his plays should merely be photographed as accurately as possible, it is a waste of time for anyone to go and see them. The screen is not the handmaid of the theatre; and its appeal is, or should be, primarily to the eye, not to the ear, and the director's task is to use his cameras with the maximum of effect. If anyone disagrees with these axioms, then he is in much the same position as the pupil who fails at the fifth proposition in Euclid; he remains at the *pons asinorum*.

Mr. Lewis is the director of "Arms and the Man"; he was also in charge of "How He Lied to Her Husband," the Shavian playlet which began Mr. Shaw's connection with the films. Mr. Lewis should have been warned by the reception accorded to that picture that it were better not to direct at all than to be compelled to make gramophone records. The Americans, who were first in the field, refused to have anything to do with Mr. Shaw's plays if they had to produce them under his conditions; they were wise, and, incidentally, should have saved themselves a lot of money. In the prosperous times Hollywood did not worry so much about expenditure, but nowadays there is rather a different tale to tell. The fantastic salaries of the stars have been cut—I should not be surprised to see them fall further—and some of the cooks have been pulled out of the broth; both these changes should be beneficial. If a picture is to be successful, the fewer people who have to give the "All Clear" signal the better, and the most important voice is not the author's but the director's.

The Poor Public

I sometimes wonder whether Mr. Shaw and Mr. Ervine, who hold much the same views, have not confused the film director with the play producer; however, so long as Mr. Shaw can find companies willing to produce pictures according to his ideas, so long will the public have to grin and bear them.

The main change in the West End programmes this week is at the Plaza. Here there are two pictures which are in strong contrast to one another, and, though neither is as good as it should be, the mixture should prove popular.

"Million Dollar Legs" is not the kind of film which the title suggests; the legs belong to the major-domo of a mythical kingdom, and the picture is a skit upon the Olympic Games. As these are at their zenith at the moment, the theme is at any rate topical. Those people who remember the Keystone comedies will recognise the name of the director, Mr. Cline, and those of W. C. Fields, Andy Clyde and Ben Turpin will bring back memories of many a knock-about farce. In addition to these old comedians there are Jack Oakie, Lydia Roberti and a newcomer, Susan Fleming.

The exchequer in Klopstokia is at a low ebb, so the President, who holds his position by virtue of his physical strength, engages Jack Oakie to remedy the defect. After seeing the President's biceps and the major-domo's legs, the latter immediately decides to enter a team for the Olympic Games; the advertisement which should accrue from a victory in these, he thinks, would be quite sufficient to ensure a loan. The enemies of the State promptly enlist the services of an enchantress, more seductive even than Mr. Max Beerbohn's Zuleika Dobson, and so efficient is she that the Klopstokian team are but shadows of themselves. The State, however, is saved at the end by the President's magnificent prowess with the weight, which he not only raises but throws, thus completing at the same time the rare double of the standing lift and putting the shot.

Some of this is very amusing, but the camera has been used too legitimately, and the farce never becomes "the riot" that it should.

A Trite Story

In direct contrast is "Shopworn," a film featuring Barbara Stanwyck. This actress has got great possibilities, but the stories with which she is being provided are getting poorer and poorer. Her performance here is full of intelligence and, though her outbursts are in too high a key, she shows herself once again to have a sense both of comedy and drama. The trouble is that the theme of a poor girl loved by a rich man and thwarted by the rich man's mother because she is not of equal birth has been worked to death. This time the poor girl is a waitress and the young man a doctor; the mother prevents the marriage, so the girl makes a success of herself without it. Once more back in the old home town as the celebrated, or rather notorious actress, she and the young man, now the notorious, or rather the celebrated, doctor, come together at last, and what becomes of her acting or his practice is buried beneath the orange blossoms.

It is impossible to be really interested in so trite a variation as this, but the opening, which is light, and the middle and end, which are heavy, afford Barbara Stanwyck a chance to show the range of her ability, and she gives a much better performance than the picture deserves.

The general releases, though they feature two very popular actresses, are extremely mediocre. "Prestige" contains a lot of elephantine jinks in a jungle, where men try to be "pukka" and all want to be "sahibs"; in this kind of thing Ann Harding is wasted. "Polly of the Circus" contains Marion Davies and Clark Gable, as a clergyman. This picture is garnished with some very unsavoury lines, used in connection with the Bible, and some vulgar scenes, in church and out of it, which should have been omitted. The censorship methods in this country have many times caused me to wonder, and I cannot understand why these particular lines and scenes, which do not help the story, should have been thought suitable for public exhibition: I may add that I have yet to see a priest and a Roman Catholic church shown in an unsavoury light.

NEW NOVELS

Loads of Love. Anne Parrish. Benn. 7s. 6d.
Let Me Go. Flora Sandström. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

Beacon Cross. Dunn Severick. Grayson. 7s. 6d.
Upstairs, Downstairs and . . . A. R. and R. K. Weekes. Ward Lock. 7s. 6d.

IF Miss Parrish has done nothing else, she has at least given us a perfectly delightful piece of characterisation in this new novel of hers. Bessie—rich and very condescending—is superb. She is just the sort of person that we all detest but must unwillingly admire. Poor, fat Bessie, who was on a diet to regain her slimness and who couldn't resist cream and cakes and blanc-mange ("I oughtn't to have it, but just this once won't matter"), goes blunderingly on over everyone's pet corns supremely unaware that such a word as privacy exists, and forces all her guests to have a good time whether they want it or not.

Miss Parrish has surrounded her Bessie with a fairly representative crowd of aunts, uncles, cousins and friends, and we find the story of Edward and Katherine and Jenny rising naturally and realistically out of the hubbub and chaos which is inevitably Bessie's normal background.

Dominating Bessie

How very earnest is Edward in his own eyes, and how very priggish does Miss Parrish show him to be. Still, it is quite a pleasant little story and exceedingly pleasantly told, but I kept finding myself turning over the pages quickly to see how much more I had to read before I came to the next reference to Bessie. Miss Parrish has a subtle gift of delineation, and she has lavished this gift on her pen portrait of Bessie, who really dominates the book as much as she dominates her guests. I couldn't stop chuckling over all the wicked little thrusts which are yet so true to life in the picture of Bessie, or the two precocious children, Penelope and Plummer, their adoring mother who made a practice of childishness ("Mamma would love to, Penelope. May I, Auntie Katherine? Pretty please, as the children say?"), and their father, a very pretentious and unsuccessful artist with a penchant for criticism ("A land of make-believe. Yes, I could almost envy you. Just to slip out of the workaday world into your own dream kingdom—rather different from the study and discipline that have to go into the attempts at reality which some of us poor painter fellows sweat over"). And dear little Penelope again, intent on parading her virtues:

"Oh, papa dear, you said a bad word. Mamma says we must never say sw—." Penelope clapped her hand over her mouth.

"Oh, I nearly said it!"

It is a delightful book. Miss Parrish's wit is exquisite, and there is no novelist I know who has quite such a gift of stripping the glamour from her characters and showing us real, live human beings in their pathetic and usually rather silly reality. But Bessie queens the lot. "With

loads of love from Bessie," and what a load it always proved.

"Let Me Go" is the story of Mitzia Ertel, vagabond, artist and lover. She was torn between the two emotional forces which dominated her life, the love of her husband and the freedom which her art needed for its proper expression. Unable to choose between them, she wavered from one to the other, but her husband proved the stronger tie.

A Drunken Genius

It is a colourful story and written with a fine romantic swing that is at times impressive. A good deal of the book deals with Mitzia's life in a travelling circus, and her painting is inspired, and to a certain extent typified, by the figure of Johann Sachs, a drunken genius and the proprietor of the circus. He in his turn is inspired by her portrait of what he might have been, so that he becomes the great impresario, and there grows up a complementary reaction between these two which lift them both into the higher planes of their respective media of expression. The murder of Sachs is the culmination of the emotional merging of their mutual inspiration.

The descriptive scenes of circus life are extremely well done, and there is a glamourous turn of words which almost lifts the reader into the atmosphere of sawdust and grease-paint. The book just misses the heights of romantic literature, but the margin of its failure is small. Undoubtedly, Miss Sandström is an author whose work shows a distinct promise, and one day she will give us a novel which is likely to prove as big a success as did "The Constant Nymph," of which this present book is mildly reminiscent.

In "Beacon Cross" we have the story of a man's sacrifice for an ideal. It is a back-handed sacrifice in a way, for he only achieves success by championing and leading the opposition and in consequence stirring up sufficient resentment against his followers to bring about a powerful and militant adherence to the ideal which he cherishes in secret. It is a religious crusade, doomed to the usual apathetic and ignominious end, which he supports by his apparent anti-religious activities, and we are asked at the end of the book to picture a great national wave of Christian fervour as the inevitable result of organised opposition.

Though the story is apt to strain a little at the fairly elastic texture of our credibility, it is not without merit as a piece of thoughtful and well-constructed writing, and it reads easily and naturally. It would have been better, perhaps, had the crucifixion at the end, happily not a fatal one, been omitted, as the note it strikes, though distinctly graphic, is unreal, and it detracts from what, otherwise, would have been a very readable and unusual, if somewhat unlikely, book.

Of an altogether different type is "Upstairs, Downstairs and . . ." This is just pure romance, complete with clergyman's daughter masquerading as parlour-maid and a Russian prince masquerading as chauffeur. As one expects in this type of book, wrongs are righted and everything ends in an aura of undying love. It is not likely to tax severely anyone's intellect.

GERMANY'S AGGRESSIVE POWER

The Russian Face of Germany. By Cecil F. Melville. Wishart & Co. 6s.

BOOKS may not be like Lord Eldon's port ("All port is good, Brother, but some is better than other,") yet among good books a similar distinction may be drawn, for some good books are good books, whereas there are others not merely good, but indispensable. It is to the latter category that Mr. Cecil F. Melville's book belongs.

The Russian Face of Germany is a good book, as being well composed, clearly written, and the work of a trained journalist who publishes it under a keen sense of responsibility. Though short, it is solid and, though solid, eminently good reading. It is indispensable to all Englishmen who love their country, because it supplies facts on which they can form a serious judgment as to what England's foreign policy should be. To put the matter in a nutshell, Mr. Melville's book shows that, whereas Germany is in theory in possession of no greater armaments than those allotted to her by the treaty of peace, she has in reality built up a formidable aggressive power and that this power is based upon a close military understanding with Soviet Russia.

The Plot's Origin

That such an understanding exists is already known in a general way; Mr. Melville for the first time traces its development in as close detail as can be expected concerning matter so secret, and gives far more definite proof than anyone could have the right to expect.

The German-Soviet intrigue dates back in its origin to the Russian revolution, when General Hoffmann, commander-in-chief on Germany's Eastern front, arranged the despatch of Lenin and a number of his henchmen through Germany to Russia, there to act like poison-gas on the Russian army. This once accomplished, with the success that is a matter of public history, Germany's first object was to obtain complete mastery of Russia, and so nearly was this achieved that during the greater part of 1918 nothing of importance could be done in Russia without the assent of Germany, who held the Ukraine and dominated the North by means of troops within reach of Moscow.

And Its Fruits

The collapse of the German Western front however brought direct action to an end and changed German policy in Russia. Thereafter it has had two faces: one by which to menace Western Europe with the Bolshevik power, unless Germany be permitted to arm in defence of Europe, and the other by which to form a military Hinterland at the service of Germany against her former enemies.

General Hoffmann himself devoted much attention to exploit the former position; when he failed, the latter came gradually to form the settled basis of policy for the Reichswehr chiefs, who have for the last nine years or so been the real governors of Germany and now openly handle the reins. "To-day," writes Mr. Melville, "the Russo-

German collaboration (the *Abmachungen*) is a reality; and not the least real thing about it is just this seemingly paradoxical fact that it is not based on a furtive liaison between the Russian and German Communist parties, but upon a plan carefully elaborated between the Reichswehr and the Red Army."

No one could be further from jingo or anti-German prejudice than Mr. Melville. He is a Liberal journalist who travelled widely in Central and Eastern Europe for the Westminster Gazette between 1927 and 1929. Being a man of intelligence he could not fail to acquire evidence of what was going on under the surface: being an honest patriot he could not refrain from publishing his knowledge, which he began to do by an article in the *Sunday Referee* in 1930. His present book contains all the evidence he has been able to obtain up to date.

In an admirable initial chapter entitled the Disintegration of the Peace Settlement Mr. Melville describes the political conditions which led to the revival of German practical ambitions, rightly pointing to the blunder of the Allies in imposing on Germany a professional army capable of great elasticity. He then comes to the heart of his subject in a convincing description of its results that have blossomed into a network of German gas, airplane, and munition factories situated on Soviet territory and secret military training, experiment and finance. Among other matter of unfortunately vital concern to ourselves he describes how in October 1926 three Soviet ships laden with munitions were docked at Stettin, one of them carrying at least 350,000 shells.

Methods and Aims

He tells of the "Gefu," the short name for the seeming innocent "Society for Promoting Industrial Enterprises," that has organised poison-gas manufacture in Russia under the control of an ex-German army corps commander; later, when its operations became suspect to be changed to the "Wiko" or equally unalarming "Wirtschaftskontor." He gives names and dates belonging to various German military missions to the Soviets, and shows the vast quantities of material for the manufacture of munitions that Germany has sent them.

In this hellish alliance between oligarchic Germany and Communist Russia it is plain, as Mr. Melville points out, that each party believes it can double-cross the other: the Kremlin thinks to use Germany in the cause of world revolution, the Reichswehr to use the Red Army to give it European hegemony. Whichever may be right, the upshot is not less dangerous to European civilisation and to us. No one can afford to neglect the potent facts assembled by Mr. Melville. Because his views tally with those recently voiced in these columns, they are not less true. He shows the destructive forces ranged against us: it is for us to guard against them. Forewarned is forearmed. No one now can complain of lack of warning.

J. P.

FEROCIOUS EPISODES

Señor Bum in the Jungle. By Algo Sand. Gol-lancz. 10s. 6d.

TO all the platitudinous old men who sit in the smoking-rooms of their clubs and tell tall stories of the exploits of their youth, adding at the conclusion the tag, "Truth is often stranger than fiction, my boy," I can heartily recommend "Señor Bum in the Jungle." I can also recommend it to all readers of thrillers and adventure stories, readers with jaded nerves, in fact, to anyone who cares for a really good book.

It is an extraordinary narrative, this "Señor Bum in the Jungle." As page succeeds page and thrill succeeds thrill, one begins to wonder whether there are any more incredible episodes left to describe. Yet there it is, waiting for you, on the next page. Amazing! The adventures which this young American experiences grow more and more flamboyant the further one reads. They excel in ferocity, treachery or monstrosity episodes which anything but the most disordered of imaginations could conceive, and seem to dwarf the most gruesome of the late Edgar Wallace's masterpieces into comparative triviality.

It was a crazy undertaking, this of Señor Bum's. Unprepared, without any experience whatever, and with the weirdest of equipments, he set off by himself to explore the Orinoco and the Rio Negro. "No puede pasar," explained everyone to whom Señor Bum told of his project. "It can't be done." But Señor Bum did it. Fever, snakes, mosquitoes, crocodiles, murderers, savages and ruffians of all descriptions stood in his way, but the unpreparedness and audacity of his resolve seemed to carry him through.

This is how he met the notorious Don Juan and bully, "Negro" Victor:

"When I first saw Negro Victor he was roaring drunk. . . . I was sitting on the bank of the river watching the arrival of a small sailboat. Standing in the prow was a huge, evil-looking Negro, a bottle of rum in one hand and a revolver in the other.

"He was dressed rather oddly, wearing a khaki officer's coat and a Sam Browne belt. The trousers were a bright blue with a red stripe down the sides. His immense black feet were bare, and looked more like the paws of some beast. But it was the hat which impressed me most—a large tropical helmet, jet black, and covered with gold braid; an astounding final touch to this grotesque and amusing figure.

"Who on earth is that?" I asked Manuel, my host in this little town.

"He's Colonel Victor," he informed me. "He is feared and hated. They call him Negro Victor. God help the girls and saloon keepers."

Algo Sand (Señor Bum) writes very entertainingly. A rather macabre humour raises his book from being a mere chronicle of breathless escapades and makes of it a refreshing narrative. The publishers vouch for the truth of the book, but that seems to matter little. The real question is, does it read well? It reads excellently. Indeed, a truly amazing book.

P. K. K.

A SCOTS ADVENTURER

A Cavalier in Muscovy. By Baroness S. Buxhoeveden. MacMillan. 15s.

Baroness Buxhoeveden has taken the diaries of Patrick Gordon, the Scots adventurer of the 17th Century in Sweden's and Russia's service, to afford her the means of describing Russia in pre-Peter the Great days. She does it well; and the authority is adequate for the student of affairs seeking a vivid light on that period. What the English so often forget is that Scottish gentlefolk, up to almost 1850, preferred the Continent for education and trade to England and the English connection. It was not unusual but rather the custom to go to Paris, Amsterdam—broad East Coast Scots is almost Holland in tongue—or Hamburg. Gordon sold his sword, like others, to the highest bidder, serving him faithfully while under contract. For 28 years he did so in Russia, becoming a plenipotentiary and a high authority in trade as in war. It was his luck (his canniness as the Scots would say) that enabled him to guide Peter the Great to the throne and thereby to begin to Europeanise Muscovy. It is the incidental writings of the authoress, based on the painstaking diary of Gordon for which we must thank her. For here we see in broad Doric the habits and customs of Russia, then hardly less than now semi-Mongol and Oriental.

JOLLY BUT ARTIFICIAL

Murder Could not Kill. By Gregory Baxter. Ernest Benn. 7s. 6d.

MR. Gregory Baxter has a way with him so fresh and jolly that one would like to make a better report of his latest book. But, truth to tell, the story of *Murder Could Not Kill* is too artificial by half.

To transplant an American gang leader to London may be no bad idea; but there are limits to our belief in him. This one has become to all appearance a rich and respectable Englishman; but not reformed, no. He bamboozles a multi-millionaire from his own land and becomes engaged to the millionaire's daughter—though why? For she does not love him; then on being found out by the millionaire he kills him and puts the blame on the girl's real father—for the millionaire was not really her father—and kidnaps the real father with the intent to "take him for a ride"; and all this with Scotland Yard pretty helpless, and the truth gradually got at by a newspaper artist who himself is nearly murdered two or three times by the gang, and a lurid ending in a theatre financed by the villain whose charms are irresistible to actresses as well as millionairesses.

Nevertheless thousands will read *Murder Could not Kill* with avidity, being carried along by its author's aforesaid very jolly way, for he revels in his own story and will make them revel, too.

THE DOWN-AND-OUTS

To the Streets and Back. By Scott Pearson. John Lane. 7s. 6d. net.

TO get inside the skin of another man and see the world through his eyes and with his mind is a desire that haunts many, and the illusion that we can do so the frequent mainspring of imaginative writing. Hardly less difficult is the attempt to look at the world through the eyes of a class into which we were not born, from an angle to which we have not natural access.

Doubtless there are many classes in which we can imagine ourselves situated: the butcher and the baker can make a fair shot at what the experience of the candlestick maker must be, and there are stations in life, harder or easier than our own, not separated by insuperable obstacles from possible understanding of them. But there is one so completely removed from the life of most men, that our trouble in fancying ourselves placed in it and in comprehending the nature, the hopes and fears of those belonging to it, may well seem infinite. These men are "the down and outs."

A Born Observer

To the Streets and Back is a book about the down and outs, by one of them, giving his experiences and his philosophy of life. Therefore it is an almost unique book; it is a book of immense value, and it is indescribably fascinating. Plainly it was only made possible by the fact that its author is a born observer, and also that he has by sheer force of character as well as ability emerged from an inferno sinking to which most of his fellows leave all hope behind.

Some of us may, in peculiar circumstances, have known the anguish of uncertainty, under what roof to sleep, how to find food, where to turn for help, not to know whether there will be help, food, or roof at all. It is not a pleasant experience. Here is a man who for months and years has lived so, yet had the strength to resist temptation to crime or suicide, and has come through.

Mr. Scott Pearson hails from Leith. The end of the war left him starving in London, and his first page describes a night in St. Martin's Crypt—"one of the few free shelter 'joints' in London where you are not asked insolent questions by the social workers." Almost all ads. in papers, Mr. Pearson found by trying, are bogus or silly. London was crowded with men hungry, seeking work, and trying to get somewhere else. "England doesn't need men any longer," said one, bitterly.

In this predicament our author had a bit of luck. He doesn't believe in luck—quite rightly, when one knows what he has been through—but there was something about him that at the worst moments created the saving opportunity. Now he boarded an American ship outward bound, said he was a fireman, signed on and got to New York. America, the supposed haven, turned out rather worse than England, for on top of black unemployment came the weight of American prejudice against the foreigner. Mr. Pearson cultivated an American accent, but lost two good jobs through punching men for insulting Great Britain. Toronto was worse, and generally Mr. Pearson has small good

to say of Canada, Montreal earning his special disapproval. This city ("O God! O Montreal!" echoes Samuel Butler) causes him to remark: "I am a match at any time for any rogue, whether he be (a) white slaver (b) blackmailer (c) 'sky pilot' or (d) police constable."

Montreal's chief fault is having "too much professional religion," and anyone who wants a refreshingly candid opinion of religious organisations and their relations with the poor must study *To the Streets and Back*. The only one to come out unscathed is the Y.M.C.A.; it gives you, says Mr. Pearson concisely, value for your money. The rest use their down and outs as sprats to catch whales in the shape of dollars and "sell Christ nightly."

For twelve years Mr. Pearson tramped his way up and down the New World—Buffalo, Milwaukee, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Chicago, Montreal and New York again. At Pittsburgh he made a hit as "Bill Sykes, the author and lecturer." Everyone knew Mr. Sykes' name. Mr. Pearson cut his stick before they remembered where they had heard it. Another lecturing success was at Buffalo, where he simply told stories of a hobo through the States. But mostly he picked up a living as a chucker-out (though only 10st.), occasional prizefighter, labourer, hallporter, seaman, and what not. In his judgment most of the talk about Chicago gunmen is hot air blown up by the papers, and he once said to an American: "I could finish American gunmen in twenty-four hours." "How?" came the astonished query. "By giving them work." But work was the hardest of things to get.

A Lucky Mistake

A passage home came through a ship's officer in Montreal mistaking Mr. Pearson for his brother: he was busy stoking at sea before the mistake was rectified. A bright experience as a pavement artist near Bush House gave him ideas that he began to sell in Fleet Street. We note again, with pride for our profession: "I always found the Fleet Street editor distinctly honourable and prompt with the cash. Whether I sold him news, gossip, and idea, or (sometimes) a signed article, he paid me at once and well. Wise fellow!"

But Mr. Pearson's release was due to the merest accident. One day he heard a stupid fellow preaching about success in front of the Irving statue in Charing Cross Road. Mr. Pearson followed and spoke on failure, with personal illustrations. A political agent heard him, tried to get him as an advertiser and met his refusal with the words: "You're the first honest man I've ever met." Days passed again, and nothing happened ("I didn't lose heart, though. You can never be anything but cheerful in London"), when suddenly another man who had heard the Irving statue speech turned up and offered Mr. Pearson a job—a real job, a good job, lasting. Mr. Pearson has it still.

To the Streets and Back is a grand book. Its style is crisp and telling, its information astounding, its stories magnificent fun. It has every title to success.

THE SOCIOLOGY OF NUTRITION

Hunger and Work in a Savage Tribe. By Audrey I. Richards. Routledge. 10s. 6d.

FTER a surfeit of sex sociology it is a pleasure to find an anthropologist seeking another approach to the study of primitive society, and laying it down as an axiom that "nutrition as a biological process is more fundamental than sex."

In the preface which Professor Malinovski contributes he acclaims Dr. Richards' work as a pioneering piece of research of the first importance; and it is no exaggeration to say of it that it is worthy to stand beside his own "Crime and Custom in Savage Society." Dr. Richards started with a theory that nutrition, with all it implies, must have played an immense part in the building up of social groups, and having developed this theory in the light of anthropological and sociological record, she went out to Africa, and put it to the test of field-work among the cattle owning Bantu of South East Africa.

A Kinship Unit

She chose this group because it is engaged in pastoral, hunting and agricultural activities, and because of its strongly marked family structure, the basic territorial unit being "a kinship unit, an extended family under one patriarchal head." In a series of admirably lucid arguments we are shown how nutrition and its problems act and react upon all the social activities of these people, starting with the suckling infant, passing through childhood, when the relations between the children and their seniors in all grades of kinship are seen to be governed continuously by food, on to adolescence and the gradual incorporation of the young people among the food-producers; the boys becoming tenders of cattle and hunters, the girls the raisers of cereals and vegetables and the preparers of food.

The Importance of Food

It is demonstrated that this preoccupation with food is one of the most potent factors in the social structure, affecting marriage, wedlock, and family life generally. Nor is this all. Food becomes a symbol of wealth and power, something sacred and worshipful, and enters into nearly all the social and religious rituals of the tribe. The chiefs are wealthy in their herds, and are potential givers of food in times of scarcity. The Kings and magicians are rain-makers, assurances of harvests; the worship of the Gods and ancestral spirits is accompanied by food sacrifices; and the most important tribal festivals are the prayers for rain and the blessing of the harvest. The whole social system is bound up with the raising and distribution of food, and the wonder is that this should be the first book dealing specifically with the social and cultural functions of nutritive processes.

It marks, therefore, another advance in the science of anthropology, and it is a work that no student of sociology or psychology can afford to overlook.

FRANK VIEWS

A Ceylon Commentary. By P. S. Smythe. Williams & Norgate. 6s.

IF Mr. Smythe is as pleasant a railway companion as his book proved to be, he may yet redeem his "failure" as he terms his sojourn in the Ceylon Civil Service for 20 months, fresh down from Oxford. With an observant eye, ready pen if occasionally vinegary, and a little touch of malice, he gets his own back. And he describes outstations of Government and people missed by the ordinary voyager.

The author is very frank on the white-native and sex questions. Mixed marriages and even the forbidden liaison seem fit in his eyes. It is all so old and yet so new to raw youth. But he writes well enough to make one think. Mr. Smythe has no time for the Amery-Donoughmore report and constitutional reforms. Rickshaw boys with votes indeed! And the Empire Crusader will get a chill at his analysis of Ceylon's revenue position. He is a trifle innocent in his comments; and at times the zeal for a phrase makes one recall the fault of the Oxford Union.

But his babu howlers are choice. "The deceased left his offspring in depraved circumstances," might join the war-widow "forced to lead an immortal life."

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CORRESPONDENCE

Woman to Woman

SIR,—Forgive my presumption in seeking space for this letter as a result of reading the fine outspoken call for "A Humble and a Contrite Heart," by the Saturday Reviewer. I presume to respond to this call by pointing out, if I may, a considerable obstacle in the way of the Divine progress of Christian regeneration in England that seems to me to be worthy of being placed as a fact to be tackled if we really mean to put aside our eyewash and pretence and get down to Christianity *pur et simple*, again.

Only the hard facts of Christian doctrine, which we have succeeded in whittling down until they are mere half-truths and a pandering to the spirit of worldliness and humanitarianism, can recover our sense of sin and therefore, our sense of virtue, for it is the absence of virtue rather than the presence of sin which is an obstacle. For this reason, I venture to suggest that this grave obstacle in the way of those who seek to turn our minds and hearts to God, to-day, is the publicity given by the daily Press to *Woman and her Body*.

We are defenceless against this unfair onslaught and shameful oppression through a channel over which we have no control. Therefore, I appeal to those who will take The Saturday Reviewer's call to heart to recognise a serious element of danger in the unrestricted advertising by the daily Press of false ideals and corrupt want of restraint in an effort to corrupt the women of England.

Once the enemy of Christian nations has achieved this, the rest is easy and the rest is the peril from which the whole world recoils at this moment—one which women are themselves demonstrating indifference to by not resisting the ever-increasing encroachments upon their privacy and self-respect. I allude to the publicity they court in demonstrating in public places—and even at garden parties—the cult for the health and beauty of their practically naked bodies.

Is the woman of England's sense of the charm of modesty so completely lost that she does not resent those who offend against it? We profess to be Christians, but this is not Christianity. It is worse than the unrestraint and unashamed uncultured life of the uncivilised and pagan. Apart from the vulgarity of women making a public spectacle of immodesty, must we continue to tolerate such breaches of Christian laws? Must we be perpetually reminded of the lack of soul-culture in this country to-day?

The body's health, the body's desires, the body's licence (called freedom), the body's ease, the body's brief life, the body at all angles and at all costs *first* is the continual and nauseating round of to-day's publicity. What of the Soul of England if women neglect it? We are on the brink of worldwide perils: men, women and little children are starving, homeless, helpless; tramping from town to town in search of work, food and shelter, and yet the cult of Woman's Beauty of Body goes on.

We women allow this state of things, we agree

to it by sharing in the exaggerated ideals of woman's freedom which has now become woman's desertion of Duty and the Home.

Selfishness—crass and defiant—is the doctrine preached to her by the enemies of God and society: the enemies whose tools we are satisfied to be, the enemies whose slaves we shall soon be but for the grace of God and the efforts of the few to stem the tide of corruption, even now rotting the defences of England's Empire.

As a woman to women I beg to appeal to their sense of womanhood and of loyalty to their country—if I cannot, now, appeal to their natural sense of self-respect and modesty—since the senses of our souls have been dulled by want of practice in the natural virtues of woman—I appeal to their patriotism to beware of indifference to the world's need of their virtues at this grave hour in the history of our Empire.

A WOMAN READER.

A Claret Question

SIR,—As to a sentence in my letter last week, among the chances of a slip of the pen, illegible writing, or a printer's error, the odds may look like two to one against me. But I still think I wrote, as I certainly meant to write, "claret should be accompanied by a brown meal." In any case, many apologies for having appeared more misguided and heterodox than I really am; for I hold that white soups, white sauces, and fish should not come near the claret.

RICHARD R. OTTLEY.

The Multitude of Counsellors

SIR,—There is some difficulty in getting a platform in the "popular," or "syndicated," Press, and if a letter is published, anything that might cause offence to the refined susceptibilities of King Demos is rigorously "blue pencilled." Hence I am daring to seek the sanctuary of the *Saturday Review* with its long record of fearless independence.

Perhaps the least sophisticated reader of this fragment would not contend that the nearly-seven hundred persons who form the House of Commons, possess the best brains in Great Britain. Nor are Ministers and their Secretaries selected because of their ability they possess but, chiefly, because of their actual, or potential, value to the Party.

Until some better form of Government arrives, and many people see it coming, the spoils, I suppose, must go to the victors.

No one can deny that the growth of Democracy has increased the growth of extravagance. The present Government, notwithstanding its Tory numerical supremacy, does not lag behind its Socialist predecessor in endless conferences to health resorts, at home and over-seas. And they neither travel nor live third-class.

Lord Salisbury, Mr. Disraeli, and two Secretaries, made a Treaty, in Berlin, that kept the peace of Europe for forty years. When Wellington had settled matters with Napoleon

France had to pay an indemnity of 700 millions of francs, payable in five annuities. This was involved by banking interests on the Continent and in England, by provision for armies of occupation, by the confusion of loans, interest, currency.

Yet Wellington practically dealt with this delicate and complex matter single-handed. But then, Wellington was a soldier, a scholar (as indeed he was—his French, spoken and written, was better than Napoleon's) and a gentleman.

HENRY DUKE.

Port Soderick, Isle of Man, 26th June, 1932.

"Non-Stop" and the Cinema

SIR,—In reviling the cinema as a weak and foolish thing suitable for women and juveniles, Mr. Gilbert Wakefield tilts a very poor lance for the theatre generally. Strangely enough he compares the present asinine craze for non-stop everything with a phase which this womanish cinema is rapidly outgrowing.

What he says of the cinema had once a basis of truth, but signs are not lacking of the rebirth of the film and a generally improved culture—both of film and audience. The increasing interest given to the better foreign films, coupled with the distinct falling off of patronage suffered by most "Picture Palaces," forms the best possible urge for the film industry to improve both technically and artistically. It is notable that really interesting films are shown in small cinemas having an assured patronage.

This is paralleled in the world of the theatre by such institutions as the "Gate Studio," where more high class, well acted plays are to be seen in a season than normally falls to the lot of the entire West End with its battalions of "White Elephant" theatres "Just off the beaten track" which, so say managers, accounts for the non-successes presented!

But this is some way from non-stop and the cinema. Mr. Wakefield admits all this variety to be poor stuff. Possibly that indicates that its patrons—so superbly masculine—are poor stuff too! Anyway, why pay even a shilling for bawdiness and beer? Any pub will supply the latter, and any smutty nosed ragamuffin with a piece of chalk can evolve better bawdry on a fence.

No, no Mr. Wakefield, the theatre, music-hall, and cinema must be non-stop in general improvement as well.

J. P. LAWRIE.

12, Greville Place, St. John's Wood, N.W.6.

An Inquiry

SIR,—Perhaps some of your readers will know where this comes from:—

"But still in the beautiful city
The river of life is no duller,
Only a little strange as the eighth hour
dreamily chimes.

The city of friends and of echoes,
Ribbons and music and laughter,
Willows and blossoming chestnuts,
Lilacs and whispering leaves.

(DR.) H. F. DUNBAR, O.B.E.

Langshaw, Kirtlebridge, Dumfriesshire.

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CITY

Lombard Street, Thursday.

The week opened with a buoyancy in the more speculative markets of the Stock Exchange that has not been seen for a long time. London took its cue from America, where the rise in commodity prices and a revival of activity on Wall Street over the week-end were the chief factors operating. The rally that has occurred in metal prices and in some other commodities—notably cotton—is undoubtedly a bull point; but this apart the position is fundamentally unchanged and still leaves much to be desired. Sentiment plays an important part in Stock Exchange and City affairs. If hope is tempered with caution it is a useful attribute; but the danger at the moment is lest this wave of optimism should be carried too far. A spectacular rise in prices of Stock Exchange securities is not warranted and far from doing any lasting good would be a source of considerable danger.

U.S. Cotton Crop

The publication of the United States Government Bureau report on the position of the cotton crop proved more "bullish" than anticipated and sent prices sky-rocketing both here and in America. Here again it is unwise to form hasty conclusions. In the first place the estimate is the initial one of the season and much may happen to the crop between now and harvest time. Secondly, the poor estimate of the crop, as indicated by a condition of only 65.6 per cent. of normal, implies heavy depredations by boll-weevil. This may easily prove to be exaggerated. It seems clear that the authorities, in arriving at their surprisingly small estimate of production, have taken a very cautious line. It will, perhaps, be well for others to follow their example.

Wasteful Competition

Anything that can stem the tide of traffic decreases or conduce to further economies in working are of importance to the railway industry of the country. The sanction given by the Minister of Transport to the pooling arrangements at competitive points recently, made by the London Midland and Scottish and the London and North-Eastern Railways is, therefore, all to the good. It is a small matter compared with the other problems that confront the railway companies. Very little relief, for instance, can be expected until there is a definite recovery in trade, while a settlement between the road and rail transport companies is a paramount necessity. But the fact that the authorities are beginning to recognise that wasteful competition is no good to anybody is in itself something to be thankful for these days.

Sound Argentine Finance

While last week's report of an impending moratorium on the Argentine foreign debt payments were not taken seriously in London the official denial of such rumours is nevertheless welcome on this side. Argentina, like the other South American countries, is feeling the strain imposed

on her financial resources by the low prices of her exports, to say nothing of the losses entailed by disturbed markets throughout the world. Whatever economies are necessary to bring about a balanced Budget it is only in accordance with the high traditions of the country's past financial record that no alteration is to be made in the interest or amortisation service of her foreign or internal debt. These services, the official report states, will continue to be met punctually, as heretofore.

Harrod's Interim

The maintenance of the interim Ordinary dividend of Harrods', Ltd., at 5 per cent. actual for the half year does not necessarily imply the maintenance of profits, nor does it give any indication of the probable distribution for the year. At the same time, it justifies the confidence in the future of the Company as expressed by the chairman at the last meeting. The net results with which he was dealing showed very little contraction compared with the preceding year, while, actually, the volume of sales had increased substantially, and a record total was reached in the number of customers served. The dividend for the year was 17½ per cent., or only 2½ per cent. less than for 1930, and the maintenance of this rate in a year of such unexampled difficulty as the present would give general satisfaction. The price of the Ordinary shares is about 55s.

Tax-Free Investment

While trade remains depressed the permanent investor has little liking for industrial utility shares; but there is a constant demand for well secured preference shares of industrial companies, many of which give a much better return than can now be obtained from gilt-edged Government stocks. Looking round the market, Vickers Five per cent. Cumulative Preference £1 shares strike one as being worth attention. These are obtainable around 17s. 6d. The interest is well covered by current revenue. It is cumulative and tax-free up to 6s. in the £., so that on this basis a yield is shown of £5 14s. 6d. per cent. net. Equivalent to over 7½ per cent. gross. The company has passed through its re-organisation phase and is in a strong position to take advantage of any revival in the iron and steel and the shipbuilding industries. In the last balance sheet cash and Government securities figured for £4,120,000, since when there must have been considerable appreciation.

After Five Years

Established some five years ago, the deferred shareholders of the brick and tile-making firm of Eastwoods Flettons, Ltd., are getting their first dividend. The distribution is to be 7 per cent. This is in respect of the year to 31st March last for which period a profit of £15,187 is reported, against £14,224 for the preceding year. As the preferred ordinary shareholders are entitled to a non-cumulative dividend of 7 per cent. in priority to the deferred, and to 40 per cent. of the profits then remaining, their dividend for the past year is 8½ per cent. against 7 per cent. last time. The preferred ordinary shares were last dealt in around 18s. while the deferred shares, which are of 1s. denomination, are standing at about 2s.

Literary

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The "Saturday Review" Suggests This Week:

[We hope that this page will keep our readers in touch with the best of the Theatre, Film, and Wireless programmes, of the week.—ED.]

Next Week's Broadcasting

Apart from the Promenade Concerts, which will be broadcast in the National Programme on Monday, Thursday and Saturday and in the Regional Programme on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, there is little of outstanding interest.

The Regional programme on August 14th includes a Concert relayed from Ostend Kursaal at 9.5 p.m.: "As You Like It" (in which there appear to be one or two dangerous bits of mis-casting) makes its appearance in the Regional programme at 9.20 p.m. on August 15th and in the National programme at 8.10 p.m. on August 16th; the first act of Mozart's "Così Fan Tutte" will be relayed from Broadcasting House, Munich, at 7.55 p.m. on August 17th (National); and there is a fairly strong Vaudeville programme on August 20th at 8 p.m. (Regional).

It is not the purpose of these notes to criticise past programmes, but an apology is due to anyone

who, as a result of last week's notes, listened to "As It Might Have Been" on Monday, August 8th. The idea was to reproduce a programme as it might have been in 1902. The writer can only plead in extenuation that he was hoist with his own petard. Apart from the enormity of referring to "Christ's College, Oxford," and including a noisy step-dance in an imitation of Eugene Stratton—solecisms of which no self-respecting producer should be guilty—the general handling of the programme was grotesque, and some of the individual performances execrable.

It was pitiful to hear an excellent artist like Stuart Robertson in such low company. If this programme "might have been" in 1902 licences would never have exceeded the first hundred thousand.

Every care will be taken in future not to recommend programmes of this nature.

Theatres and Films

Theatres

Orders are Orders. Light-hearted farce in which the films and the army prove to be good mixers. 8.30. Thurs. and Sat., 2.30. *Shaftesbury.*

The Pride of the Regiment. Clever comic opera in the modern manner of Victorian parody. 8.45. Tues. and Fri., 2.45. *St. Martin's.*

Dangerous Corner. The Priestley Play and, if not altogether a triumph, a show of real interest. 8.45. Wed. and Sat., 2.30. *Lyric.*

The Gay Adventure. Seymour Hicks at his cleverest. He and the play still running vigorously. Great fun. 8.30. Wed. and Sat., 2.30. *Whitehall.*

Casanova. Music, drama, romance, a gorgeous spectacle, and all the Coliseum tricks. 2.30 and 8.15. *Coliseum.*

The Dubarry. Music and romance again and an excellent entertainment for London visitors. 8.15. Wed. and Sat., 2.30. *His Majesty's.*

Musical Chairs. Actually a success for a first play by an English playwright. 8.30. Tues. and Sat., 2.30. *Criterion.*

Evensong. By Edward Knoblock and Beverley Nichols. 8.30 Wed. and Sat., 2.30. A vivid, human and dramatic play about the middle-ageing opera-singer. Finely acted by (among others) Edith Evans and Violet Vanbrugh. The best play, and also the best money's-worth, in London. *Queen's.*

Twelfth Night. 8.30. Thurs. and Sat., 2.30. A new presentation of Shakespeare's most delightful comedy. *New.*

Films

Jack's the Boy. A good rollicking farce with music. Jack Hulbert and Cicely Courtneidge. *Tivoli.*

One Hour with You. Not very good Lubitsch, but amusing and light. Maurice Chevalier and Jeanette MacDonald. *Carlton.*

Der Hauptmann von Köpenick. Based on the famous hoax. A very good picture, indeed. German dialogue with English sub-titles. *Cambridge.*

M. Mr. Fritz Lang's fine picture founded on the Düsseldorf murders. *Rialto.*

Alone. A Russian picture laid in Siberia and directed by Mr. L. L. Trauberg. Suffers from post-synchronisation, but contains some fine photography. Supported by Emil Jannings in *Danton.* *Academy.*

With Cobham to Kivu. A well photographed and an extremely interesting picture of Central Africa. *Marble Arch Pavilion.*

Thark. Another of the Aldwych farces. Ralph Lynn and Tom Walls. *New Gallery.*

General Releases

Nothing of Importance.